

Newsletter #1

August 87.

# THE WIMMINNS PRISONER SURVIVAL NETWORK



Ramona Johnson Africa, the only adult survivor of an assault on the MOVE disciples of John Africa home in May 1985 by the Philadelphia police which resulted in the bombing of their house, the gunning down of MOVE children and adults as they attempted to leave by a back entrance and the destruction of sixty surrounding rowhouses is presently incarcerated at Muncy Prison PA. Details of MOVE'S persecution and information surrounding events that lead up to the May 1985 firefight have been documented by the ABC and are available if you send a very nice note expressing your interest through the WPSN. Ramona Africa herself is circulating information concerning MOVE'S religious and political beliefs. The group MOVE has always placed a great emphasis on wholistic foods and MOVE people are now requesting support in this matter. Through a company called "Wisconsin Cheese" Muncy inmates have the opportunity to stock up on as much fresh nuts and cheeses as they can afford "as a sort of Xmas treat". The WPSN wonders how many other prisons have such a programme and encourages any readers with spare change, supporters of nutrition or supporters of MOVE to forward as soon as possibly possible money orders or donations through MOVE supporter Denise Garner at 1630 S. 56th St. Phila., PA. 19143.



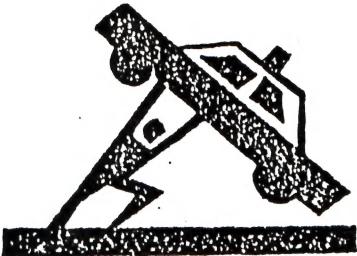
Welcome to the first issue of the Women Prisoner's Support/Survival Network. The WPSN is an effort of the wimmin of the Anarchist Black Cross Toronto. As most of our present support work involves male prisoners, the WPSN represents an attempt to establish a more effective network of support for specifically women prisoners and awareness of women's conditions of incarceration within an anarchist-feminist analysis. Way we see it prison is the most physical manifestation of a process of State control exercised upon us throughout our daily lives. All classes of society commit crimes but it is only one class that goes to prison for their acts. Anarchists throughout history represent those individuals in conflict with the State. There is one reason we have conflict and that is because the government is a structure designed to maintain capital control to the affluent class. The equations to this control require the calculated wasting of resources in the generation of market demand and the stabilizing of market prices. Just as the rich manifest incarceration as a warehouse for our anger they manifest our poverty in the engineering of scarcity for profit's sake. There is enough food grown in North Amerikkka alone to feed all the world's hungry, yet the \$tate of decay would rather see this grain destroyed and the Third World dependent on the chemical fertilizer and laboratory seed installment plans of First World agribusiness conglomerates. This same logic legitimizes the manufacture and retail of weapons intended for deployment against civilians while criminalizing and imprisoning the woman who steals a car.

Women suffer from many different kinds of prisons, which seek to restrict our control over our bodies, education, economic status and the right to live how we want to live. If property control is any expression of the distribution of global capital, the fact that women own fully one percent of Mother Earth strikes a sharp reflection of women's oppression within a white-male-dominated society. Or maybe it is a co-incidence that most lawyers are very rich white men who happened to be good at latin. 80% of prisoners incarcerated today are for non-violent crimes, while the \$tate that jails them conducts a war of ecocide against our Mother Earth. As anarchists, we attempt to practice means of subsisting upon this earth without serving the luxury demands of the rich and without shredding the land into useless deserts. In defense of this struggle we support all acts which target or expose those instruments of the \$tate designed to restrict access to alternatives that would sustain and heal this planet.

The WPSN hopes to act as a forum for ideas, art and writing of women in prison as well as a bulletin of related prison issues. Although we will be focussing our concerns to political prisoners and prisoners of war you don't have to define yourself as either to be screwed by the \$tate and the WPSN is happy to hear from everyone. Resist and Survive; the spirit is free

!!!!!!





## Womyn dies of neglect in Montréal Prison

Madeleine, a prisoner at Maison Tanguay prison, in Montreal, has died of Medical Neglect. Madeleine was working on pottery in the Atilier of the Prison, when she began to experience difficulty in her breathing. An assistant went to the guard to inform her, the guard phoned the infirmary - but, no nurses, they were all in a conference. This was at 1:00 pm., by 2:00 pm. Madeleine was now having pains in her chest, still finding it hard to breathe. Again, she asked for a nurse. The guard neglected to check the situation. There were suggestions to phone the hospital. They tried to get a supervisor to phone. By 3:00 pm., Madeleine was on the floor, having extreme difficulty with breathing, by the time the supervisor was summoned, by the guard, Madeleine had died. If the assistant was allowed to phone the hospital (an assistant was told she could not phone out to the hospital by the guard, because it was against the rules) then we're sure Madeline would be alive.

The other wimmin in the attilier panicked, with the general feeling of realization that no one gave a damn about them, and that they could die in prison, without anyone caring. The next day, some of the wimmin decided to refuse to co-operate with the daily schedule, in protest of Madeleine's death. People are still waiting for a cause of death inquiry. Nothing has been heard for about 3 weeks - of either if there has been an inquiry or not, or of any results.

In 1972, the Federal government made a deal with the Quebec government, that Maison Tanguay prison would warehouse all francophone wimmin prisoners in Canaduh. Because there are Federal Prisoners in a Provincial prisons, there is no funding allotted for programs for the wimmin in Tanguay. In Tanguay there are wimmin doing a few weeks up to others serving life sentences. The prison is so over crowded, that 'rumour' has it , that the "officials" are so worried about riots, that they allegedly installed windows that are easy to break out of. Any womyn in Tanguay who exercises any political expression, to bring about change, is thrown in solitary confinement. The wimmin who go to the prison's 'beauty salon' and get all made up are given merit points, and the wimmin who don't partake in this 'beautification' process are given demerit points.

Please write letters to the Elizabeth Fry society, demanding action be taken to have a cause of death inquiry for Madeleine, as well as demanding better treatment of wimmin at Tanguay. Explain that Madeleine's life might have been saved if an assistant was allowed to use the phone.

The Elizabeth Fry Society, Montreal  
7250 St-Laurent  
Montreal, P.Q  
(514) 277-7033

## ILOPANGO WIMMIN'S PRISON

The face of repression by the Salvadoran government against the people's call for economic and social justice has changed in the last seven years from one of extreme and visible brutality to one more subtle and hidden. The death squads still operate, but their targets are the leaders rather than the masses.

Today there are over 1000 political prisoners in Mariona, the men's prison, and in Ilopango, the wimmin's prison. These prisoners come from all sectors of the Salvadoran society, but all have basically been charged with the same crime, collaborating with the FMLN. Opposing the current situation and trying to bring about change is the actual crime these prisoners have committed or are suspected of committing; collaborating with the FMLN is the government's justification for imprisoning these people.

Last May, I had the opportunity to go to Ilopango Prison and talk to the wimmin in the political prisoner's section. There we learned about their stories and witnessed their strength and courage, in spite of the fact that they are in prison.

A womyn is usually captured by the National or Treasury police and, in accordance with Salvadoran law, she can be held fifteen days for interrogation. During this time, she is subjected to torture and rape and is usually forced to sign a confession. The torture involves sleep deprivation, drugs, constant questioning, humiliation by being stripped and not being allowed to use a bathroom, threats to her family, shocks and so on. After signing a confession she is then transferred to the prison.

At this point the womyn is usually in a state of mental and physical trauma. If she is injured or sick, she is so afraid of the police that she would rather stay with her fellow inmates than go to the hospital. Her children under seven can remain with her in the prison. The older children go to a detention home where the conditions are very bad, or they go to relatives. Because the judicial process is not functional, a prisoner's only hope for release is through a general amnesty or through international pressure.

The wimmin are well organized, strong and resourceful. At the time of my visit they were planning a garden, holding classes, helping one another, operating a craft shop to make things to sell, and educating themselves to be able to build a new Salvadoran society.

COPPES, The Committee of Political Prisoners of El Salvador, was formed in 1980 to demand better conditions. This was accomplished by staging hunger strikes. COPPES has been able to put an end to harrassment by the guards within the prisons, but the families still have to endure it when they visit.

Amigas will be starting a campaign in solidarity with the wimmin in COPPES. The goal of this campaign is to aid the wimmin on both a political and material level. If you are interested in working on this project, write: AMIGAS, P.O. Box 22292, Seattle, WA 98122 U.S.

**Stephanie Smith**

**AMIGAS, Seattle Women for a Free El Salvador**



# STOP! STRIP-SEARCHING IN MAGHABERRY

The Armagh wimmin prisoners have been moved to a new prison at Maghaberry. Despite millions spent on security, and protests from all over the world, the wimmin continue to be forced to undergo degrading and humiliating strip-searches.

Since strip-searching was introduced into Armagh in 1982, there have been over 3,500 strip-searches endured by wimmin - the majority of whom are unconvicted prisoners awaiting their trial.

Wimmin are searched on entering and leaving the prison. Prisoners who may be as long as two years awaiting trial must make regular court appearances. During their trials they may be strip-searched twice daily, five days a week. Wimmin as old as 70 and as young as 15, menstruating wimmin, wimmin who have been on a medical visit for gynaecological treatment, or for a miscarriage, have been strip-searched.

## A STRIP-SEARCH

A prisoner describes a strip-search:

*"You are told to strip naked. You are always in view of prison staff, usually about six. At times there have been as many as 15. When you are naked, your body is inspected front and rear. A warder takes hold of your hands and inspects the palms, and picks up your feet to inspect the soles. It is like a cattle market. Anyone with long hair is ordered to gather their hair up on their head. Warders search your hair. Menstruating wimmin are ordered to remove their tampons or pads. If a prisoner refuses, their sanitary protection is forcibly removed and inspected."*

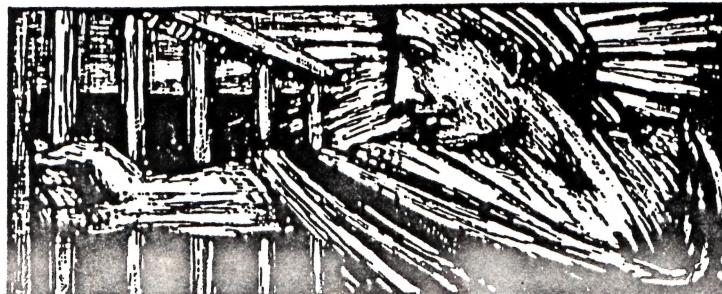
*"Wimmin who refused the search were beaten, kicked, forcibly strip-searched and left naked on the floor. One womyn was blind-folded and badly beaten. Her legs were forced over her shoulders. She was then put on 60 days' punishment."*

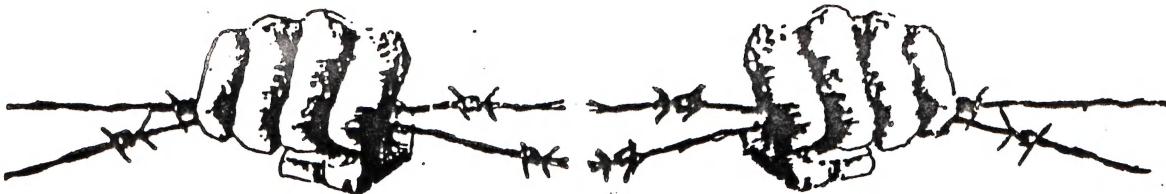
## THE MOVE TO MAGHABERRY

Four days before the transfer of the Armagh wimmin to Maghaberry, Cardinal O Fiaich appealed to the British government to make the move an occasion to end "*this objectionable practice*" and to base the new regime on "*a system more fully in accord with human dignity*".

The Cardinal's appeal followed the condemnation of strip-searching by tens of thousands of people as a degrading and humiliating practice which serves no security purpose whatsoever.

In March, over 30,000 signatures to a petition calling for the end of strip-searching were presented by Sean Mac Bride to Peter Barry. Numerous trade unions, including the ICTU, trades councils, city and borough councils, as well as many prominent individuals including Foreign Minister Peter Barry himself and Charles Haughey, have called for strip-searching to be ended.





When the wimmin were transferred to Maghaberry, one elderly womyn was strip-searched. The following day, Nicholas Scott, the 6-County Minister for Prisons, replied to the growing protest that "*strip-searching would continue to be a feature of the regime in Maghaberry Prison.*" In the following ten days, over Easter there were 13 strip-searches.

#### SUPPORT THE CAMPAIGN

You can write to Nicholas Scott, Minister for Prisons, at the Northern Ireland office, Belfast; and to Peter Barry, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Iveagh House, Dublin 2.

You can sign the petition and get others to sign.

You can affiliate to the campaign so that you are kept in touch with events and send a donation to the Stop the Strip-Searches Campaign, A/C No. 7239/1717, Bank of Ireland, Rotunda, Dublin 1.

For further information please contact: Campaign Against Maghaberry Strip-Searches, 5 Blessington Street, Dublin 7; or 51/53 Falls Road, Belfast.

*"Two wardresses walk in. They order you to stand up; they take off your clothes. They start by inspecting your shoes as you stand stark naked. They go through your panties, your bra, every seam of every garment. Then they go through your hair and inspect your vagina.*

*"Nothing is more humiliating. And you are all alone in that cell.*

*"I was so angry. I considered just about everything I could do to myself as a form of protest. If I didn't have children - and if it wasn't for the fact that I would be playing into the authorities' hands - I might have taken my life."*

-WINNIE MANDELA

*"To intrude and violate the very private part of a person is, I think, one of the most damaging and violating things that you can do and is therefore a very powerful way of breaking down a personality."*

-PROFESSOR IVOR BROWNE

#### action report:

400 people picketed Maghaberry, on International Wimmin's Day, where Irish Republican wimmin prisoners are subjected to strip searching. In a statement to the picket the 15 wimmin prisoners condemned the practice as "*legalised rape of mind and body*". All wimmin are forced to strip on entering and leaving the prison and are forcibly stripped if they refuse. In a prison covered with barbed wire, watchtowers, steel fencing and surveillance cameras, where visitors go through cages, tunnels, searches and 13 locked gates to reach the prisoners, strip-searching is used by the state to demoralise the wimmin and break their spirit.

From: WARZINE (reprinted from Counter Information July/Aug. 1987)

## URGENT:

Theresa Ramashamola is a symbol of the thousands of South African wimmin who courageously face the brutality of a ruthlessly repressive regime.

Theresa- the first womyn in South Africa to receive the death sentence-is a symbol of the thousands of South African detainees, of political prisoners, of those in solitary confinement, and those who have been forced into hiding and exile to avoid torture.

In December 1985, Theresa Ramashamola and five others were sentenced to death by hanging for their alleged involvement in the murder of Mr. Khuzwayo Dlamini. As an official in the puppet township government, Dlamini was complicit in the repression of his own people. His killing took place at the onset of the uprising of the Vaal area townships in September 1984,a moment which heralded a new wave of massive popular opposition to the oppressive conditions of apartheid. The violent repression unleashed on the township communities by armed police and army forces since this time, has resulted in the deaths of hundreds, in the detention and arrest of over 36,000 and the imposition in 1985, of a state of emergency, continuing today.

The trial of Theresa and the other "Sharpeville Six" was characterized by testimony of torture, coerced witnesses and shakey evidence. Theresa - 23 at the time of her arrest and a worker in a roadhouse - was tortured and later suffered futher injuries while in police custody. Theresa's case is not an isolated one.

For wimmin, who hold primary responsibility for the caring of children and sustaining of households, detention is particularly treacherous. Infants accompany their mothers to prison; small children are left behind. Or it is the mothers who are left behind and the children who are detained, arrested, tortured. Wimmin in custody are vulnerable to sexual assault at the hands of police.

The appeal of Theresa's sentence convenes on September 10, 1987. It is necessary that we put immediate pressure on the South African government if we are to affect the appeal and the amount of suffering this womyn will be forced to endure for her role in resisting a fascist regime.

An international campaign to stop Theresa Ramashamola's execution is underway requesting that concerned persons write immediately to P.W. Botha demanding Theresa Ramashamola's release and to Brian Mulroney demanding that he intervene. Copies of these letters may be forwarded to the South African Women's Day Campaign

P.O. Box 672, Station P  
Mississauga, Ontario  
M5S 2Y4

*-reprinted from the South African Women's Day Cmpaign.*



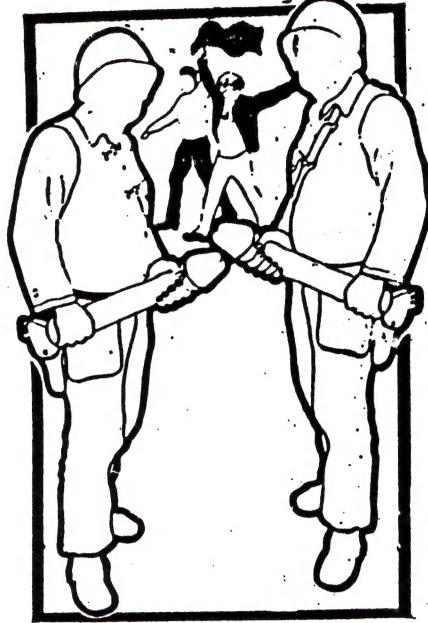
# **FREE THERESA RAMASHAMOLA**

Thereasa Ramashamola - the first woman in South Africa to receive the death sentence - was convicted for her alleged involvement in the killing of a collaborator, the deputy-mayor of a black township. The murder occurred in 1984 at the onset of a new wave of popular struggle against the oppressive conditions of apartheid.

Theresa is a symbol of the all South African women political prisoners and detainees whose "crime" is their fight for a better future for their children and their demand for a free, non-racial and democratic South Africa.

We, the undersigned, join the international campaign to stop the execution of Theresa by demanding that the Canadian Government intervene. The sentence is to be appealed on the 10th of September, 1987.

**Please return petition to above address before Aug. 31/87.  
Thank you.**



## SEXUAL HARRASSMENT OF WIMMIN POLITICAL PRISONERS

In the U.S. today there are over 100 Prisoners of War and political prisoners. We all have in common our active resistance to the U.S. government in its war crimes and war machine, in the colonization and attacks against nations struggling for self-determination and independence; in its racist and unjust system based on white supremacy and bourgeois rule; in its violence and domination of wimmin. Some are Prisoners of War captured in the course of struggling for the national liberation of their nations - Puerto Rico, New Afrika, and Native American nations. We are classified as "violent, extremist, and terrorist" by the federal and state prison systems to justify all treatment at the hands of the prison authorities.

The purpose of this classification is to cement the process of criminalization. The prisons need to deny our existence to mask the reality that there is revolutionary resistance from within. The prisons as part of the Justice Department believe that by destroying POWs and political prisoners they will destroy and demoralize the movements and social forces that we represent. The patterns of violent counterinsurgency used by imperialism around the world are institutionalized in the prisons today.

The physical and psychological attacks on wimmin POWs and political prisoners have grown more violent and systematic as the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP)/U.S. Marshal service (arms of the Justice Dept.) have become less and less concerned with maintaining the appearance of due process. The anti-terrorist conference in Puerto Rico in 1978 laid out guidelines for repression against revolutionary movements, particularly the Puerto Rican Independence movement. They state that because revolutionary individuals cannot be rehabilitated, they must be sentenced to lengthy sentences; they must be isolated; they cannot be allowed to become martyrs. In other words, revolutionaries must be neutralized. In the field this means death; in the prisons it means political and physical destruction. The intent is to drive political prisoners "crazy", to alienate prisoners, to set up prisoners, to kill prisoners. The justification is "maximum security status", and the classification is "terrorist". The prisons, while publicly denying our existence, understand full well that political prisoners represent a special threat to the system and are not the

same as other prisoners. Within these walls everything is done to intensify that difference.

The use of sexual violence is part of the program. It has always been a particular weapon used against wimmin, but in the prisons, it is *policy* against wimmin political prisoners and POWs. Isolation, physical brutality, psychological torture, sexual threats and intimidation are used to destroy our spirit of resistance. The hole, the box, segregation, mental wards in prison hospitals, holding wimmin prisoners in men's prisons, and control units - the names of these conditions change, but the repressive measures serve the same function. Wimmin POWs and political prisoners are being used in experimental techniques by the federal BOP and the state prisons all over the country. Judy Clark is in her second year in the box at Bedford Hill's (NY) wimmin's facility (the longest sentence given to a womyn to serve in the hole). Carol Manning had been in segregation in Framingham (MA) wimmin's prison where she was singled out, brutalized and sexually violated by male guards in forced cavity searches. Puerto Rican POW Alejandrina Torres and political prisoner Susan Rosenberg had been in a control unit for wimmin at Tucson Federal Correctional Institute (FCI). We have just been transferred to the new high security wimmin's control unit at Lexington (KY) FCI.

The development of the control unit as a model for repression against political prisoners and POWs, as well as the most militant prisoners has been in the making since the 1960s. The attacks on wimmin involved in the liberation struggles of their people and the Northamerican wimmin who have participated in revolutionary activity, has existed since the 1950s.

\*\*Lolita Lebron, Puerto Rican nationalist and political prisoner for 25 years, spent a year in isolation and then 9 months in the prison mental hospital at Lexington, KY, FCI.

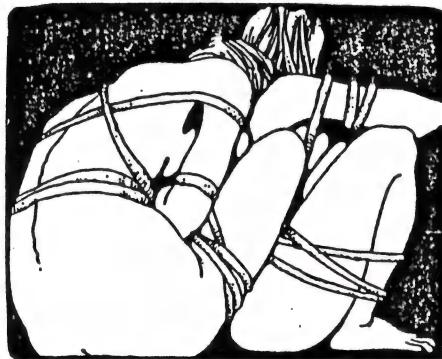
\*\*Assata Shakur, New Afrikan Freedom Fighter who was liberated from prison in 1979 by the Black Liberation Army, spent a year in the hole in Davis Hall, the segregation unit in Alderson wimmin's prison. She was in a "behaviour modification" program. She also spent a year in the basement segregation unit of a men's state prison in New Jersey.

\*\*Marilyn Buck, Northamerican political prisoner, spent 18 months in isolation in Davis Hall, in a behaviour modification program.

\*\*Rita Brown, Northamerican political prisoner, spent many months in Davis Hall and 2 years living in a prison detention centre designed for pre-trial prisoners; she spent years in a men's state prison in Nevada.

\*\*Haydee Torres and Ida Luz Rodriguez, Puerto Rican Prisoners of War, spent 19 and 8 months each in the Cardinal Unit isolation cells in Davis Hall, the first "control unit" for wimmin in federal BOP.

\*\*Alejandrina Torres, Puerto Rican POW, spent 3 months in the men's segregation unit at Chicago Metropolitan Correctional Centre (MCC) and was sexually assaulted twice by BOP guards and a lieutenant. She was transferred the day after her sentencing to Tucson, and she had been there a year.





Sexual threats and sexism as a weapon are rampant in the prisons as a whole. It is an underpinning of the institutional policies of the BOP. It is encouraged and applauded by the administration and by the guards. One regulation says that male guards can pat search a womyn prisoner at any time. In an "emergency" situation, a male guard can strip-search a womyn prisoner. Defining an emergency situation is left up to the individual discretion of the guard. In every case where sexually abusive contact on the part of guards against us has happened, it is the prisoner's word against the guard's. Strip-searches are conducted regularly after any contact with non-BOP personnel. A strip-search is exactly that. You are made to strip naked and every part of you is inspected. You must bend over and spread your behind; your ears, mouth and hair are inspected. (The policy of strip-searches has been resisted by Irish wimmin political prisoners - they have said it is one of the most dehumanizing and degrading attacks on them carried out by the British and Irish authorities). Strip-searches in U.S. prisons are standard and violate our very dignity as human beings.

Healthcare is also used as a weapon. There are almost never wimmin healthcare workers, and there are no provisions for the special medical needs of wimmin. Our security classifications are used to either deny us decent medical care, or used to turn serious medical problems in to physically tortuous situations. Drugs, depressants, tranquilizers, are regularly dispensed; when they are refused they are put into our food.

The Cardinal Unit was a sensory deprivation control unit in the desegregation unit within Davis Hall at Alderson FCI. A political campaign against it was led by the Puerto Rican Independence Movement and specifically the National Committee to Free Puerto Rican POWs. It was closed as a result of that campaign and Haydee Torres and Ida Luz Rodriguez (who were there) were transferred into general population at Pleasanton (CA) FCI. The BOP then created the wimmin's control unit in Tucson FCI. Norman Carlson, director of the BOP, designated Tucson as a temporary unit for maximum security wimmin prisoners until the new high security control unit at Lexington was finished.

The Lexington control unit opened on October 30. The first two and only wimmin sent there are Alejandrina Torres and Susan Rosenberg. The Lexington unit is the first complete control unit for wimmin. The BOP has taken 25 years of experimentation in "behaviour", in control, in their counterinsurgency studies and practices, and from that, created Lexington. It is designed to prevent "external terrorist attacks", which includes in its design, its location in the basement of the larger Lexington FCI. All wimmin POWs and political prisoners will go to Lexington at some time or another. If they are not designated there, then it will be used as a threat, or resulting from set-ups, wimmin will be sent there. The conditions that we face need to exposed and fought. The existence of Lexington as a special prison for political prisoners itself shreds the lie that there are no political prisoners in the U.S.

**By Susan Rosenberg, IISU Lexington**

From The Insurgent, Newsletter of the Committee to Fight Repression (reprinted from *Through the Looking Glass*)



## Minors On Death Row

The United States frequently sentences to death young people below the age of 18 years in violation of international law which the United States frequently refuses to recognize.

32 juveniles are presently under capital sentence in 15 of the 26 states that allow juvenile executions. 5 of these juveniles were 15 at the time of their crime, six were 16 and 21 were 17. Eighteen are black and 14 are white. Murderers of white victims in the United States are eleven times as likely to receive the death penalty as murderers of black victims. Thirty are male, two female. The two females are listed below.

The US Supreme Court has agreed to decide whether the death penalty is "cruel and unusual" punishment for american teenagers who commit murder before they are 18 years old.

Oral arguments in *Thompson v. Oklahoma* are expected to be made to the court in October, and a decision could be handed down early in 1988. In the coming months, briefs supporting Wayne Thompson's appeal are expected to be filed with the court by children's advocacy groups and legal researchers across the US.

Wayne Thompson was 15 when he was arrested along with his half brother, then 27, and two other men, also in their twenties, for the shooting and stabbing death of his ex-brother-in-law, Charles Keene, in rural Amber, Oklahoma. Oklahoma is one of only three states that does not set a minimum age for death sentencing or ask juries to consider age while assessing punishment. Most of the remaining 37 states that allow capital punishment specify a minimum age for death sentencing, ranging from 18 in eight states to as low as 12 in Montana and 10 in Indiana. A new bill being introduced in Indiana would raise that age by at least 6 years and is expected to pass. Big wow.

**Janice Buttram: white female; 17 at crime now age 24 (DOB 1-17-63)**

convicted (with husband) rape and murder of white female age 19 in Dalton, Georgia on 9-3-80 sentenced on 8-31-81.

Box 218 GWCI

Hardwick, GA

31034 U.S.A.

**Paula R. Cooper: black female, 15 at age of crime now age 17 (DOB 8-25-69)**

convicted robbery and murder of white female age 78 in Gary on 58-14-85 sentenced on 7-11-86.

Indiana State Prison

P.O. Box 41

Michigan City,

Indiana 46360



**NO MORE SHIT**

**LEXINGTON CONTROL UNIT**  
**SHUT IT DOWN!!!**

On October 29, 1986, the United States Bureau of Prisons formally opened a special facility for "high security" wimmin prisoners in Lexington, Kentucky. The main purpose of this prison is to hold and alter the behavior of wimmin political prisoner and prisoners of war. It is a blatant political concentration camp.

The Lexington control unit for wimmin was "more than a decade in the planning", being researched by behavior specialists, for the best ways to completely isolate wimmin prisoners, through sensory deprevation and physical isolation.

\* wimmin are confined to cells for 23 hours/day, with one hour devoted to an exercise period. This exercise takes place in a 50\*50' walled-in yard.

\* the wimmin are strip-searched by the guards upon returning to the cells - this is rape sanctioned by the State.

\* the wimmin are under 24 hour a day electronic surveillance.

\* if a womyn is to visit a doctor or dentist, she is hancuffed and chained around her waist

\* the lights in their cells glare down on them continuously, and they are forbidden to cover them in any way. Nor are they allowed to place photographs or pictures on the walls. They may wear only prison-issued shoes, underwear, drab shirts and "feminine" culottes. Virtually the only contact they are allowed with the outside world consists of a fifteen-minute telephone call to their lawyers each week and a visit with members of their families, separated by a glass partition, once a month. Guards are instructed not to converse with them. They are denied access to the prison library as well as the entertainment and recreational facilities. They may read only magazines, books and newspapers that are approved by prison officials, and are permitted only five books at any one time. For *companionship* they have a color television set in the cells. "Only in America," says Rosenberg, " can you abuse people, take away their human dignity, and then give them a TV and that makes it O.K."

Right now there are 4 political prisoners in the 16 bed Lexington control unit.

Alejandrina Torres, 49, a Puerto Rican Prisoner of War, alleged by the government to belong to Fuerza Armadas de Liberacion National (FALN), a Puerto Rican nationalist group responsible for some bombings in the U.S.

In 1983 she was arrested for possession of weapons and explosives - also charged with "conspiring to use force to oppose the "lawful authority" of the United States over Puerto Rico. She was convicted and sentenced to 35 years! though never accused of committing any violent act.

Susan Rosenberg, an anti-imperialist Political Prisoner, indicted for conspiracy for her alleged activities in the 1979 prison escape of Joanne Chesimard, and later in 1981 for a Brinks armoured car robbery by members of the Weather Underground. All of these charges were dropped for lack of evidence. However the State didn't like her getting off so they convicted her for possession of arms and explosives. Susan was then sentenced to a completely outrageous 58 years by Federal Judge Frederick Lacey, who recommended that she be denied parole.

\* Alejandrina and Susan have not been accused of committing any acts of violence.

\* Susan's term is 16 times longer than the average sentence for weapons possession and twice the 1985 average for first degree murder.

\* Neither one has any previous criminal record, and both maintain they have not been engaged in violence.

\* Silvia Baraldine

\* Debra Browne

The H.S.U. was not set up for *violent* or *unruly* prisoners. According to a Bureau of Prisons directive dated September 2, 1986:

"The 16-bed High Security Unit for females [was] developed to meet the needs for very secure prison space for females where placement in less secure facilities is not appropriate. Candidates for placement in this unit are those females whose confinement raises a serious threat of external assault for the purpose of aiding the offender's escape .. .

. Assignments to the unit will be made without regards to such factors as . . . Disciplinary reasons, but are a matter of classifications."

The reasons were spelled out more explicitly in the August 19, 1986, Rationale for Redesignation, which authorized Susan's transfer to Lexington:

"Rosenberg has been associated with FALN, Black Liberation Army, and other terrorist groups. She also was thought to have been involved in an 1981 Brinks Armed Car Robbery and has previously been linked to the Joanne Chesimard escape in 1979."

Appended, almost as an afterthought, is a statement that the United States Attorney's office had confirmed that the charges in connection with the Brink's case "had been dropped." Not mentioned is the fact that at Susan's one and only trial the government produced no evidence tying her to the FALN, the Black Liberation Army or any other terrorist group.

Rosenberg contends that conditions at the H.S.U. are "designed to destroy those who are in it, psychologically and physically," and "to disintegrate people's personalities." The constant surveillance, the basement cells, the absence of fresh air and human companionship, the ever blazing lights -- all those things have a single purpose: "They are trying to drive us completely out of our minds."



When Susan sought an explanation of why she had been transferred from the Federal prison in Arizona where she had been serving her time, officials at Lexington told her that the decision was, in her words, "based on an internal criterion that is secret." As she recalled it, "They said, It's not disciplinary, it's not punitive, it's got nothing to do with that," and they also said, "The only way you can get out is if you change your associations and affiliations." We asked her how she could prove to the authorities' satisfaction that she had purged herself of such ties. She said, "I think one would have to go to them voluntarily and say, I don't want to live under these conditions any longer, and, therefore, I'm sorry. I will never communicate with these other people, and, moreover, I will never desire to communicate with these other people." Susan's lawyer, Mary O'Melveny, who was allowed to visit her client on December 14 and 15 of last year, recorded these impressions of conditions at the H.S.U.:

"Imagine a world without color, any color. Only bright, high-glossy white, everywhere one looks. Even uniforms - ludicrous clothes selected for their "feminine" look - are bleached out. Nothing is permitted to brighten up, or even add contrast to, these bleak, colorless surroundings.

Next, imagine a world without daylight, without fresh air. Only artificial fluorescent lights - on all of the time. Artificial air - too hot or too cold but never real. The prison pallor one reads of takes on new meaning; both women looked gray . . .

The overwhelming sense of loneliness of this place is all pervading, the isolation is overwhelming. It is much like stepping off the regular world into some sort of frozen limbo state where an occasional real person floats by, but always by accident and always before one can get ready for enlarged human contact."

Write to: Alejandrina Torres, 92152-024

Silvia Baraldini, 05125-024

Susan Rosenberg, 03684-016

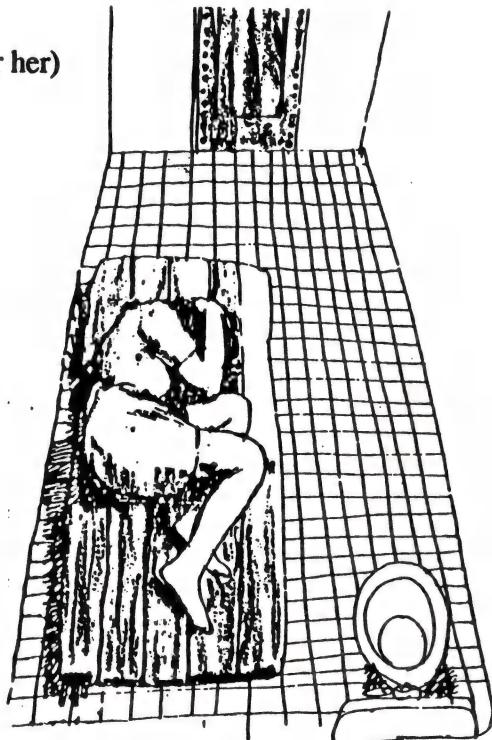
Debra Browne, (i don't know their 'number' for her)

at: F.C.I. Lexington  
P.O. Box 2000  
Lexington, Kentucky  
40512 U\$A

Send letters to these two scum and  
tell 'em how you feel:

Warden R.L. Matthews  
F.C.I. Lexington  
P.O. Box 2000  
Lexington, Kentucky  
40512 U\$A

Norman Carlson  
Director of the Bureau of Prisons  
320 First St.  
Washington D.C.  
U\$A



## Marilyn Buck

Marilyn Buck was first imprisoned in 1973 after being accused with another white womyn of supporting the Black Liberation Army (BLA) by buying ammunition and received the sentence of 10 years for posession of 100 bullets. Marilyn was moved around a great deal, doing time in small county jails or being kept in lock-down isolation at Alderson federal penitentiary in West Virginia.

Marilyn had worked closely with the Black Panther Party in California, had seen the police and FBI imprison, disrupt and murder Black Panther leaders and cadre she worked with, and had learned a great deal from the sucessful armed self-defence of a Black Panther Party headquarters led by Geronimo Pratt in Los Angeles. Thus, she supported the Black Liberation Army as a strategic response to the need for an armed clandestinity in order to ensure the survival of Black revolutionary nationalist struggle.

In 1977 Marilyn Buck failed to return to prison from a furlough.

In the spring of 1985 she was recaptured with new charges of involvement in the liberation operation of New Afrikan Freedom Fighter Assata Shakur who vanished from prison in 1979, and of fighting in solidarity with the Black Liberation Army, an outlawed armed resistance group.

"At present my conditions are not particularly disastrous. Because I am a revolutionary I am subject to special high-security measures and have more limited access than other social prisoners. However, in this particular prison, Metropolitan Correctional Centre, a federal detention centre for pre-trial detainees mostly, all the wimmin prisoners are subject to a high level of discrimination, with many less facilties for education, work, etc. offered. Male supremacy thrives in the repressive conditions of prison... I think any forum for wimmin prisoners will be positive. Wimmin are under particularly strong repression in prisons because we are wimmin, the bottom half of the social organization of the world."

Stay strong.

In Solidarity,  
Marilyn Buck  
150 Park Row,  
MCC, NY, NY  
USA 10007



# HELP ME REGAIN MY FREEDOM

Marilyn Lowery is a 32 year old black womyn who has been incarcerated in Marysville, Ohio since april 1982. She is serving a 22 year to life sentence for aggravated robbery and murder.

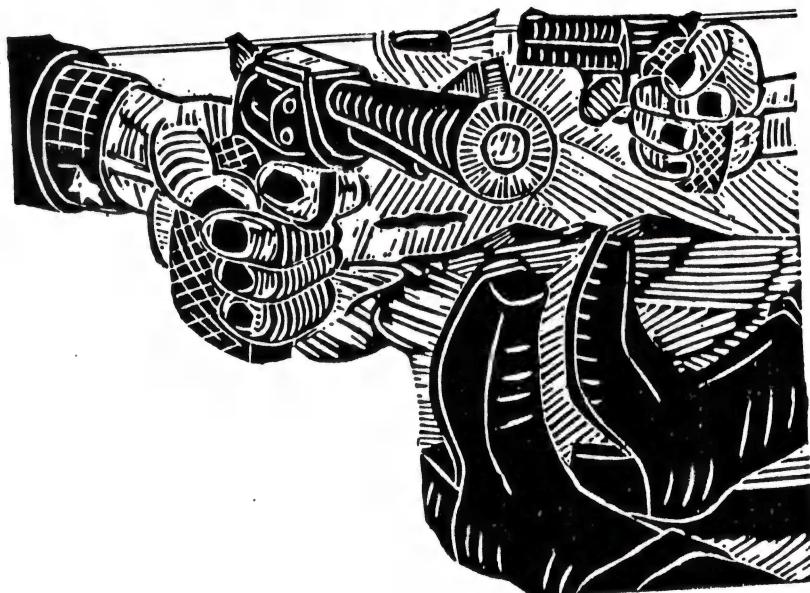
In 1976, her husband and father of 2 of her daughters, was murdered by a white man who had been drinking at a bar in Cleveland, Ohio. The man had allegedly made a statement in the bar before the killing, to the effect of "I'm going to kill myself a nigger!" Her husband, herself and her sister were in a car going past the bar when her husband was shot in the head.

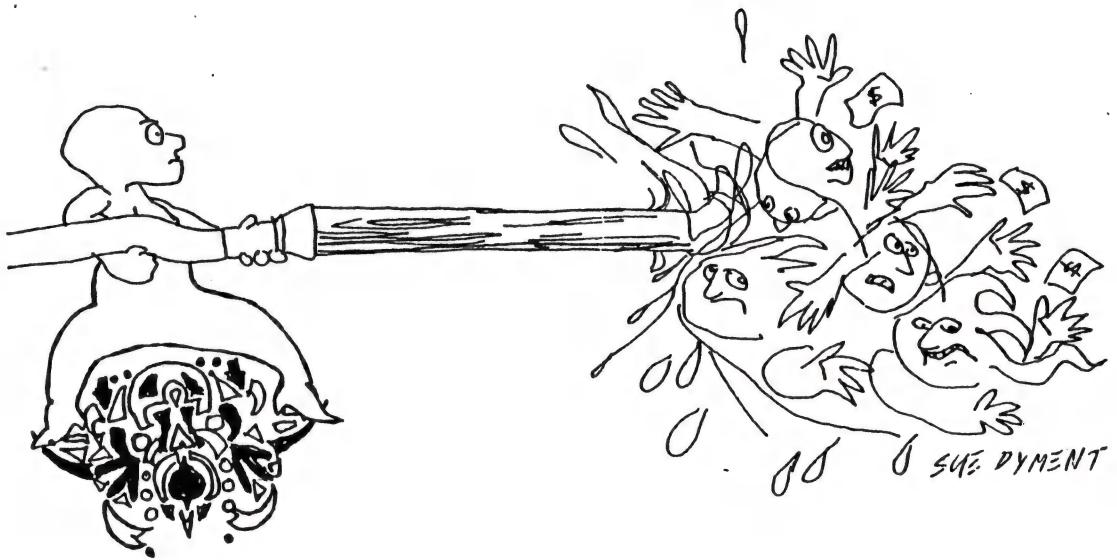
After an unsuccessful try at becoming a model and raising her children alone, Marilyn became involved with a man who she said appeared to be a success in life. "this man had a charisma about him which led me to do whatever he asked of me, and I became a prostitute for him. Ultimately, I began to fear him, but I was unsure of how to remove myself and my children from the situation."

On april 3rd, 1982, this man and her went to an after hours club in Cleveland. They had a few drinks, and, according to Marilyn, he pulled a gun and began robbing the patrons. "Being terrified of this man and the situation, I did what I was told and assisted in taking the property of the individuals at the scene. I then went to the car as another patron was entering the bar. While in the car, I heard a gunshot and when my man came out, he explained there had been a struggle and the gun went off. At the time, I had no knowledge of anyone being harmed.

Upon reading the newspaper two days after the crime, I discovered that one of the victims had been cold-bloodedly shot in the head while laying face down on the floor. All I could think of was that this man had died in the same manner as my husband."

Marilyn then says she phoned the man and told him she was turning herself in, which she didn't do cause her family was afraid for her. She was arrested a week later. The man was arrested later on.





Having no knowledge of the way the criminal injustice system works, Marilyn made a statement to police, her attorney encouraged her to plead guilty, undr the threat that she might receive the death penalty otherwise. She was sentenced, and now she won't see a parole board until 1996.

Marilyn was sent to the Ohio reformatory for wimmin. Where she gave birth to a girl conceived with the man. Marilyn says that after she discovered burn marks on her child's legs and reported it, the "officials" accused her of injuring her girl, and gave her daughter to Marilyn's parents. When Marilyn was placed in general population she was constantly harassed by other wimmin and eventually suffered a complete breakdown. She was moved to the forensic psychiatric hospital where she remained until this past fall.

Marilyn is seeking some sort of Post-conviction relief, probably an appeal, however she doesnt know enough about the old just-us (justice) system, nor can she afford a laywer. She needs some sort of assistance, if anyone knows about U.S. law, particularly appeals, please write to her. As well she is also looking to hearing from just about anyone so if you want to correspond or say hi, here's her address:

Marilyn Lowery #15896  
1479 Collins Avenue  
Lincon Cottage  
Marysville, Ohio  
43040, U\$A

Note: I have copy's of Marilyn's original letter,titled "Help me Regain my Freedom", that this article was compiled from, so if you want to see the whole letter, just write us and we'll send it.

(if you could incude \$ for postage that would be great!)

# CONTACTS:

Anarchist Black Cross-Australia (F)  
P.O. Box 1066  
North Richmond 3121  
Melbourne, Australia

Anarchist Black Cross-England (F)  
BM Hurricane  
London  
WC1N 3XX  
publishes the great magazine 'Black Flag'

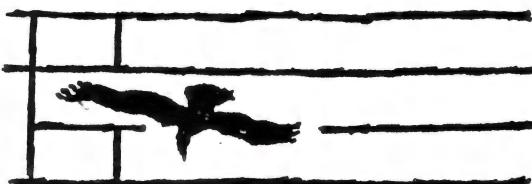
Anarchist Black Cross-Canada (F)  
P.O. Box 6326 Station A  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5W 1P7  
Canaduh  
publishes a good newsletter, about every  
two months

Anarchist Black Cross-DenMark (F)  
Nansensgade 43  
1366 Kbh.K,  
DenMark

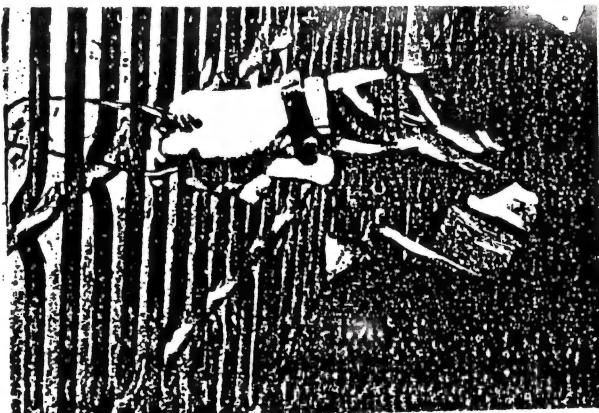
Anarchist Black Cross-Scotland (F)  
167 King St.  
Aberdeen  
Scotland

Anarchist Black Cross-U\$A (F)  
P.O. Box 2576  
San Diego, CA  
92112 U\$A

The Anarchist Black Cross is a prisoner  
support network.



(F) - Free to prisoners.



Committee to Shut Down Lexington  
Contol Unit  
Box 295 2520 N. Lincoln  
Chicago, Illinois  
60614 U\$A

Campaign Against Maghaberry Strip-  
searches  
5 Blessington St.  
Dublin 7 or,  
51/53 Falls Rd.  
Belfast  
North Ireland

Gay Community News (F)  
62 Berkeley St.  
Boston, MA.  
02116 U\$A  
publishes a weekly magazine, that runs a  
'prisoners seeking friends' column and  
good articles on gay and lesbian prisoners.

Ohio 7 Defense Committee  
P.O. Box 530 Cathedral St.  
New York, NY  
10025 U\$A

Phoenix Rising (F)  
P.O. Box 7251 Station A  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5W 1X9 Canaduh  
publishes a excellent magazine about  
Psychiatric Inmates and Prisons.

## CONTACTS continue...

*Do you use Stay-Free  
or New Freedom?*



PNS Publishers (F)  
P.O. Box 5052 Station A  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5W 1W4 Canaduh  
publishes a news service about prison repression and prisoner resistance.

South African Wimmins Day Committee  
P.O. Box 672 Station P  
Mississauga, Ontario  
M5S 2Y4 Canaduh  
organizers of the Theresa Ramashamola campaign.

Through The Looking Glass (F)  
Box 22061  
Seattle, WA.  
98122 U\$A  
publishes an excellent magazine about Wimmin prisoners' resistance, poetry and artwork.

Left-Over  
983 Metropolitan Ave. #1R  
Brooklyn, NY  
11211 U\$A

Reality Now! (F)  
P.O. Box 6326 Station A  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5W 1P7 Canaduh  
publishes an excellent magazine on prisoner resistance, native struggle, and lots more.

**Note:** We've been getting allot of our mail returned with things like "non-exsistant address" or "no forwodring address", we know that most of these addresses exsist, but friendly Post Canaduh isn't letting us through, it seams. So maybe you can help us out, if yo've seen the newsletter, and can think of some addresses of people who would be interested in it, and they havent recievied it, then can you let us know, then we will know which addresses are actually non-exsistant, and which are the ones we're haveing trouble reaching. Thanks.

## CORRESPONDENCE:

Alejandrina Torres # 92052-024  
Susan Rosenberg # 03684-160  
Silvia Baraldini # 05125-024  
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Ann Hansen  
P.O. Box 515  
Kingston, Ontario  
K7L 4W7

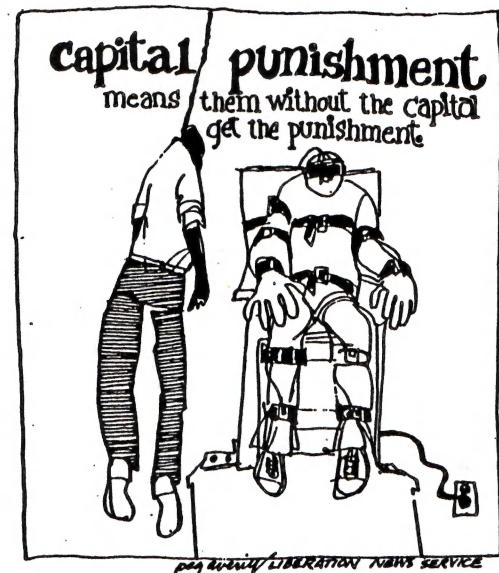
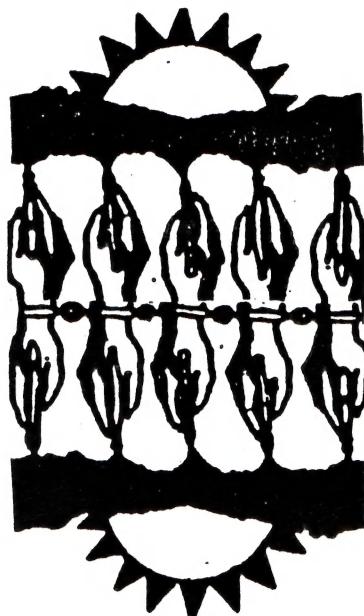
Judy Clark # 83-G-313  
247 Harris Rd.  
Bedford Hill, NY  
10507 U\$A

Marilyn Buck  
Laura Whitehorn  
MCC 150 Park Row  
New York, NY  
10007 U\$A

Ramona Johnson Africa  
P.O. Box 180  
Muncy, PA  
17756 U\$A

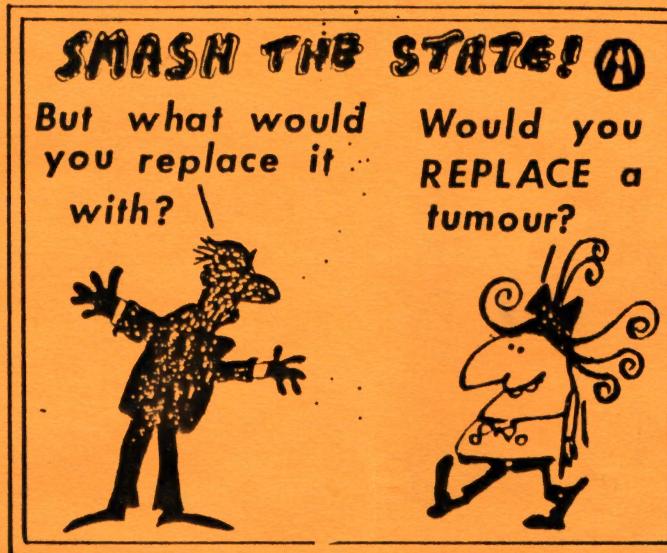
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Marysville, Ohio  
43040 U\$A

Linda Evans F-11337/5  
CCC 2800 Gravier  
New Orleans, LA  
70119 U\$A



## STREET CHILDREN MOBILIZE

" Why are children punished when they do wrong, but nothing happens to the police when they beat us?" This was one of many questions presented to the Brazilian Congress by over 400 children attending Brazil's first national street children's conference last June. Representatives from an estimated 36 million children suffering economic hardship in Brazil attended three days of discussions on the problems of family, work, health and violence. Roughly 7 million Brazilian children live in a state of virtual abandon through neglect and poverty. In Brazil an estimated 1% of the population *owns* 40% of the property, 4% in the United States. Property control being the primary expression of the ruling class it is interesting to note that wimmin as a class *own* 1% of property globally, but constitute 51% of the world's population.



### SUBSCRIPTIONS:

The W.P.S.N. newsletter is free to all prisoners. If you want a copy just write us and ask.

For other people the newsletter is on donation basis, or free if you can't afford it. So for you folk with extra cash, who like the newsletter, wanna share. O.K. ? Great.

For People(s) and groups, ect.. if you have a publication, how about exchanging, or reprinting. As well if you write asking for stuff, can you if possible include enough for postage, thanks allot, Whew.

The Wimmins Prisoner Survival Network.



I AM A WOMYN  
GIVING BIRTH  
TO MYSELF.



THE WIMMINS PRISONER SURVIVAL NETWORK  
P.O. Box 6326 Station A Toronto Ontario M5W 1P7 CANADA